

Mathematics Teachers' Response towards Teacher Empowerment at Junior High School in Indonesia

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Received March 11, 2015; Revised March 23, 2015; Accepted March 28, 2015

Abstract The research objective was to analyze teachers' response towards the implementation of mathematics teacher empowerment after the implementation of certification consisted of six dimensions: namely 1) the involvement in making decision; 2) professional development; 3) status; 4) confidence; 5) autonomy; 6) influence. The approach conducted in this research was quantitative and qualitative. Data were collected through the instrument and interview by the data source was mathematic teachers from 12 Junior High Schools in Malang consisted of 8 private schools and 4 public schools with the number of the respondents was 38 teachers. The result showed that: the involvement in making decision had the mean 3.03; professional development was 2.67; status was 3.23; confidence 3.16; autonomy was 3.29 and the influence was 3.36. These six aspects are categorized as good except professional development, which was satisfactory.

Keywords: *involvement, professionalism, status, confidence, autonomy, influence*

Cite This Article: Akhsanul In'am, "Mathematics Teachers' Response towards Teacher Empowerment at Junior High School in Indonesia." *American Journal of Educational Research*, vol. 3, no. 4 (2015): 439-445. doi: 10.12691/education-3-4-8.

1. Introduction

Education is the most important aspect in the establishment and the development of human resources. Through education, the mindset and the quality of human resource can be obtained and improved. Islam as a religion, which highlights science, obligates its people to study since born until leaving this world. Only through education any veil of life will be revealed, and through education which can generate the human resource who can reveal the brighter future.

The achievement of education goal can be taken through various factors and several factors, which have a big impact upon students, curriculum, facility and teachers [1,2]. Teacher is the main role in education process and one of the most important parts in teaching learning process [2,3,4]. The quality learning can be implemented by teacher who has a high quality [5] and it has the implication by the realization of quality students and the further impact is the enhancement of school quality.

Regarding teacher quality, by the existence of government policy through certification program, gradually teachers realize what should be done to improve their professionalism, although the majority of teachers who have already certified feel enjoying their life through additional income, which is very engrossing. It is caused that teachers who obtain certification program are mostly those who are over than 50 years old. Generally, someone who closes to the retirement, his performance is relatively stable, even though some are already decreased.

Concerning this condition, it can be seen that regarding the enhancement of teacher quality there are several problems. Nevertheless, to obtain the real result and based on the real situation, research related to mathematics teacher empowerment who serves at Junior High School in Malang Indonesia should be conducted necessarily.

Empowerment started introduced around the decade of 1970s and had developed until the end of 20th century [6]. The definition of empowerment can be seen from the meaning of the word, empowerment means giving power, giving authority, giving permission [7]. Empowerment is derived from power, which has the meaning as an ability to act [7]. From the meaning of that word, it can be stated that empowerment is a *process* to acquire ability or power, it is done by those who have power to those who are less or not empowered.

The definition of a *process* is the processing of which produces the product [7], leads to real action done gradually as the way to change those who are less empowered or powerless become powerful, either from knowledge, behavior or attitude aspect. Meanwhile, the concept of power means as the source of effort from acquiring the ability which comes from those who are less or yet empowered [8].

Reviewed from the term of etymology, empowerment has the meaning in line with the draft owned by society and in the context related to its activity [9], empowerment can be characterized when a worker is given authority to feel as the owner and can control his work [10]. Empowerment is a process of decision-making by people who implement that decision [11], also stated that as a dynamic process which involves action between someone

and his daily life to acquire the changes in the context of his personal and social life.

Empowerment has two dimensions of definition, *first* is giving power, diverting the power or delegate the authority to those who are less or yet empowered, and *second* is giving ability and a chance to other parties to do something [6].

Based on those two definitions, the second definition is in line with education field. Empowerment in this context has the definition as an effort of giving ability and a chance to teachers to conduct the activity in line with their duties in teach field [12].

The teacher empowerment consisted of six dimensions namely: 1) the involvement of decision-making; 2) professional development; 3) status; 4) confidence; 5) autonomy and 6) influence [13,22].

1.1. The involvement in Making Decision

The effort in order to life becomes directed, in line with the draft, which is enacted, it needs a leadership. Likewise, teacher profession necessarily is led by those who are ethical, highly motivated, and can affect changes, insight and can play the positive role to lead to the progress and changes [1].

The solution of a problem at school needs to be applied by leader who can give a chance to teachers to involve seeking the solution of the problem, essentially related to learning. Giving a chance to teachers to play the role in seeking the solution of a problem can make them feel that their existence is respected [14]. It can improve their motivation in implementing their activities and raise the satisfaction in working [15].

1.2. Professional Development

A professional teacher is a teacher who can conduct his daily duties as an educator [19]. Meanwhile, teacher professionalism is a continual process from know nothing to know, from immature to mature, from being directed by other people become self-direction, and a teacher is called professional if he has an ability and motivation, which means that someone works professionally if he has a high skill and sincerity to do his job well [2].

To be a professional teacher, he is demanded to have five items, namely a) have a commitment to his profession; b) deeply master teaching materials and teaching methods; c) be responsible to monitor students' learning ability through various assessment methods; d) be able to think systematically about what is done and learn from his experience; e) become a member of learning society in the environment of his profession [16].

1.3. Teacher Status

Teacher is a figure who frequently stands from *relied on and emulated* [17,18], which mean that what teacher says will be understood and what teacher does will be emulated by his students. Likewise in societal life, teacher is considered as an example in societal life, it is because a teacher is aligned as an exemplary in life [17].

Typically, teacher can be viewed based on his position and the height of his dignity in society. In United States, teacher has been changed, either in dignity or the salary he gains. In 1864, a teacher in Illinois was imaged in the

words *has little brains and less money*, it means that a teacher is presumed not having knowledge which can be conveyed to students and low income, however, today in United States teacher has a good and honorable position [19].

Concerning teacher condition in advanced countries, it is the time to think education quality in Indonesia by placing teacher position as the main priority in the development.

1.4. Confidence

After the atomic bomb incident of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the leader of Japan asked to his staff, how many teachers were still alive, and did not ask the number of polices who were still alive [17]. This question gives the meaning that if there are many teachers who are still alive, learning processes can be implemented and the effort to create the quality society will be easily realized.

The development of a country mostly depends on the great scientists, statesmen, and economists. Moreover, with the development on information technology, the experts' role in this field is necessary. They can acquire science and apply it for human purpose. It can be realized by the existence of teacher role. They succeed in conducting the research to develop science in order to succeed in breaking through until the space. Similar to the children who just learn how to read, write, and count, all these activities can be implemented by teacher's involvement. Therefore, a teacher needs to have confidence in line with his contribution, which is beneficial in all aspects of life.

1.5. Autonomy

Autonomy is a right to handle alone without others' control [20]. The elements inside the autonomy does not need external elements in implementing an activity, high trust towards self-ability, the application of the principles of high-level morality and benefit value.

Teacher autonomy in implementing his activity related to the leadership at school and outside the school. A principal plays the role of supporting teachers' activities and gives freedom in conducting their duties in the classroom, including selecting learning model in line with the materials taught so that teachers have a space to be creative and always innovate in learning. As well as with external parties, this condition is supported by the rules, which give the authority to teachers to perform their creativity and innovations in learning implementation.

1.6. Teachers' Influence to Create a Con-ducive Learning Environment

Teacher is a person whose profession is teaching [20]. This profession is implemented individually and in-group either at school or outside school [4]. Teacher is a factor, which determines high or low quality of education result [2,4]. The success in implementing education depends on teachers' willingness in conducting learning activity. Teacher is an element, which mostly determines the success in education field. It is because the enhancement of school quality depends on the level of teacher professionalism [2,19,21] regarding this matter, a teacher

should be able to give his influence to make school environment conducive to learn.

2. Research Methodology

This research approach was quantitative and qualitative with the type of research was descriptive. The subject in this research was mathematics teachers in Public and Private Junior High Schools in Malang who were 38 teachers, 20 teachers from Public Junior High School and 18 teachers from Private Junior High Schools in Malang. Data were collected through closed questionnaire.

The used closed questionnaire was as developed by [13], which was also used by [22]. By this concern, the instrument of collecting data showed that there were validity and reliability, which were undoubted to collect the data about teacher empowerment. Besides, it used the interview to complete the data of the research.

Data analysis was conducted through the calculation of mean, the percentage by concerning the frequency obtained from the closed questionnaire. Then, it was completed by the analysis of interview result to perfect the research result.

3. Result and Discussion

Based on the data collected from the instruments about teacher empowerment consisted of six aspects, a quantitative study and strengthened by qualitative could be explained as follows:

3.1. Teacher Involvement in Making Decision

As an institution, when it will do an activity, it should starts through making a planning. The success of an activity, one of the main factors needs to be considered and prioritized is planning arrangement. School as an educational institution, the planning needs to be

implemented in every beginning of the year is the arrangement of school program. This arrangement consists of School Development Plan and School Budget and Financial Planning.

Based on interview result, the information obtained was that mostly teachers were involved in making planning related to the implemented school activity. However, related to budget planning, the majority of teachers explained that for financial matter principal was close. Financial planning was discussed with the vice principal, even several schools showed that financial planning was only arranged by principal, vice principal and treasurer.

It shows that related to budget transparency, school has not been able to implement the principles of openness and public responsibility. It shows something is hidden related to financial management. Further, it can be stated that the misappropriation of authority related to the use of budget possibly occurs. Nonetheless, there are several schools, which are really opened in financial management; not only teachers but also staff and school committee are involved in planning. School committee not only becomes an institute whose duty only gives the stamp, but cooperatively plans and develops school based on the mandate that should be implemented. Meanwhile, teachers' response towards their involvement in making decision can be seen in the Table 1.

Based on Table 1, there was a confirmation that teachers were involved in the decision-making of school planning, except financial matter. Two items which had mean in the category of fair related to the involvement of new teacher promotion which was 2.29 and teachers' involvement in financial planning had mean 2.32. Both were categorized as fair. Meanwhile, related to school program, which was not related to financial matter, teachers' response had high mean 3.18, which was categorized as good.

Nevertheless, entirely the dimension of teachers' involvement in decision-making had scored mean 2.80 and this condition was categorized as satisfactory.

Table 1. Teachers' Response towards the Involvement in the process of decision-making

Items	Score				Mean
	1	2	3	4	
I am involved to take responsibility to supervise the implementation of school program	0	2	27	9	3.18
	0.0%	5.3%	71.1%	23.7%	
I am involved in making decision about the implemented programs at school	0	11	21	6	2.87
	0.0%	28.9%	55.3%	15.8%	
I am involved in making decision about teacher promotion in my workplace	7	15	14	2	2.29
	18.4%	39.5%	36.8%	5.3%	
I am involved in making decision about school funding arrangements	4	19	14	1	2.32
	10.5%	50.0%	36.8%	2.6%	
I have an opportunity to help colleague teachers' professional development	1	4	30	3	2.92
	2.6%	10.5%	78.9%	7.9%	
I have an autonomy to determine the activity of learning material development	1	6	24	7	2.97
	2.6%	15.8%	63.2%	18.4%	
I have an opportunity to help colleague teachers to develop the innovative ideas in learning	0	5	26	7	3.05
	0.0%	13.2%	68.4%	18.4%	
Mean					2.80

3.2. Professional Development

The existence of teacher certification program gives a great impact towards teacher profession. In the beginning of the implementation of certification, it can be stated that

euphoria as a teacher occurs, it is realized that all this time teacher can be called as an employee whose salary is only enough to live. However, by this certification, different point of view appears towards teacher profession. The subject of research showed that teacher awareness for

professional development could be stated as great enough. It can be seen from teachers' motivation to continue their study to master program. This condition clearly will give a big impact towards teacher quality and centered to teacher professional development. Teachers' response related to the dimension of professionalism can be seen in the [Table 2](#).

The overall mean of the dimension of professional development was 3.23 categorized as good. Related to

teacher professionalism generally was categorized as good, it could be seen from the aspect of the prioritization of professionalism had score mean 3.37; the aspect of the improvement of student achievement had score mean 3.32. Meanwhile, in curriculum matter, teachers' response can be categorized as satisfactory; with its score mean were 2.87.

Table 2. Teachers' Response towards Professional Development

Items	Score				Mean
	1	2	3	4	
I work in a workplace which prioritizes professionalism	0 0.0%	3 7.9%	18 47.4%	17 44.7%	3.37
I am necessary as a professional	0 0.0%	1 2.6%	25 65.8%	12 31.6%	3.29
I have an ability of self-professional development	0 0.0%	2 5.3%	26 68.4%	10 26.3%	3.21
I work at school which prioritizes the improvement of student achievement	0 0.0%	3 7.9%	20 52.6%	15 39.5%	3.32
I have been given an opportunity to continue the study for my professional development	1 2.6%	3 7.9%	25 65.8%	9 23.7%	3.11
My suggestion about problem solving at school is necessary for principal, teacher and staff	0 0.0%	1 2.6%	20 52.6%	17 44.7%	3.42
The teacher empowerment policy applied gives freedom and autonomy to teachers in curriculum matter	3 7.9%	3 7.9%	28 73.7%	4 10.5%	2.87
Mean					3.23

Although the effort of professional development is always, teachers find problems when they are willing to continue to master degree. The interview result showed that teachers who continued their study should be personal funding and their obligation of teaching was still implemented similar to those who did not continue their study. Furthermore, several teachers did not obtain official letter of learning permission, nevertheless, teachers kept continuing their study. Based on [Table 2](#), it could be seen that mean score of teachers to continue their study was categorized as low, even though it included in good interpretation, which was 3.11.

Besides continuing the study, the activity conducted by teachers to develop their professionalism is through seminar and training. However, substantially either seminar or training is only formality and importantly acquire the proof of participating seminar. Indeed, a teacher, before he is demanded only to teach, by the existence of certification, teacher not only teaches but also the actualization of academics is his obligation. For instance, in teacher promotion from IV b to IV c, teachers

are compulsory to write articles published in journal which has ISSN. This condition apparently makes teachers find difficulties to realize it, but gradually this problem can be solved.

3.3. Status

Teacher status frequently becomes an insulting issue, and usually Senior High School graduates who take teaching program, mostly their ability is relatively sufficient. It is caused by teacher is identic with a job which has many opinions but very less income. The existence of certification gives impact to the increase of teachers' income, and the implication is teacher welfare can be said as relatively good. It also gives an impact to the improvement of teacher status as a job, which also becomes the expectation of Senior High School graduates. Related to the implementation of teacher empowerment, teachers' response towards the status can be seen in the [Table 3](#).

Table 3. Teachers' Response towards Status

Items	Score				Mean
	1	2	3	4	
I feel being respected with my status as a teacher	0 0.0%	3 7.9%	26 68.4%	9 23.7%	3.16
I am a very effective person in working	0 0.0%	1 2.6%	29 76.3%	8 21.1%	3.18
I am respected by colleagues at school	0 0.0%	1 2.6%	31 81.6%	6 15.8%	3.13
I am supported by colleagues in developing my proficiency in learning	0 0.0%	1 2.6%	31 81.6%	6 15.8%	3.13
I have a strong basic knowledge in my expertise	0 0.0%	2 5.3%	27 71.1%	9 23.7%	3.18
I have an opportunity to cooperate to enhance professionalism with colleagues at school	0 0.0%	3 7.9%	26 68.4%	9 23.7%	3.16
Mean					3.16

Generally, teacher status had mean 3.16 with 'good' category. The interview result showed that by the existence of certification program teacher gives an impact to the improvement of teacher status. Based on Table 3, it showed that teacher was a status, which was really respected in society had score mean 3.16, as well as related to a chance to cooperate in developing professionalism was categorized as good.

Meanwhile, self-belief as someone who had expertise in his field related to teacher status, and a very effective person in conducting his duties, both had score mean 3.18 and categorized as good.

Besides, based on the observation conducted by the research towards teacher's condition after certification, it could be stated that teacher status was convincing and promising. It could be seen from teacher appearance was very different from before. This condition probably is caused by the increase of teacher status caused by the increase of teacher income; therefore, teacher appearance today is more down-to-earth and wise.

3.4. Confidence

The increase of income as a teacher gives an impact to the increase of status and it has the implication upon the increase of confidence as a teacher. The application Curriculum 13 (K-13) slightly gives an impact that teacher is less confident in implementing learning activity, it is

caused by teacher has not known and mastered yet perfectly how the implementation of K-13 is. Nevertheless, the training of the use of K-13 is always attended by teachers, importantly the place where this research was carried out. Likewise, regarding the facility to support the K-13 implementation has been prepared by school, mainly textbooks and supporting books.

When teacher's confusion reaches the top, while school has prepared the facility for K-13 learning, Minister of Education and Culture stated the moratorium of K-13. The interview result showed that despite being stopped for a while, several schools where the research was carried out remains using K-13. The reason is teachers have participated the training and the facility of learning for the next academic year has been ordered.

This condition is in line with the decision of the heads of regional education department in the entire eastern javas, which is willing to keep implementing K-13. The planning is carried out through various considerations namely the readiness of facility has been fulfilled; teachers already understand the K-13 implementation. When it must return to KTSP (school-based curriculum), parents' burden becomes heavier, therefore, several schools, importantly schools where the research was carried out keep continuing to use K-13. Moreover, teachers' response towards confidence in implementing the duties is as in the Table 4.

Table 4. Teachers' Response towards Confidence

Items	Score				Mean
	1	2	3	4	
I can help children to be independent students in learning process	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	21 55.3%	17 44.7%	3.45
I can empower my students to reach high achievement	0 0.0%	1 2.6%	25 65.8%	12 31.6%	3.29
I am involved in the program of the enhancement of student achievement	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	33 86.8%	5 13.2%	3.13
I can implement the supervision towards students' learning process at school	0 0.0%	1 2.6%	24 63.2%	13 34.2%	3.32
The teacher empowerment policy applied can support teachers for their professional development	0 0.0%	1 2.6%	25 66.7%	12 30.8%	3.28
Mean					3.29

Based on Table 4, it can be seen that teachers' response towards confidence tended to be very good, even related to teacher's ability to bring students become an independent student had score mean 3.45 including the

category 'very good'. Meanwhile, the lowest score in this dimension was the involvement in the increase of student quality with score mean was 3.13 and this condition was included in the category of good.

Table 5. Teachers' Response towards Autonomy

Items	Score				Mean
	1	2	3	4	
I agree and support teacher empowerment policy applied in Indonesia	1 2.6%	3 7.9%	13 34.2%	21 55.3%	3.42
I have a full authority in implementing learning in the classroom	0 0.0%	1 2.6%	20 51.3%	17 46.2%	3.44
I can teach in line with my field and expertise	0 0.0%	1 2.6%	20 52.6%	17 44.7%	3.42
I have freedom in developing learning materials	1 2.6%	0 0.0%	20 52.6%	17 44.7%	3.39
I have an opportunity to innovate the curriculum	3 7.9%	5 13.2%	21 55.3%	9 23.7%	2.95
I can develop teaching skill through the interaction with students	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	20 52.6%	18 47.4%	3.47
I am involved in the arrangement of the semester learning draft	0 0.0%	3 7.9%	16 42.1%	19 50.0%	3.42
The teacher empowerment policy applied can improve the status of teacher profession	0 0.0%	1 2.6%	28 73.7%	9 23.7%	3.21
The teacher empowerment policy enacted can improve education quality at school	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	17 44.7%	21 55.3%	3.55
Mean					3.36

3.5. Autonomy

Teacher authority in implementing learning activity is an autonomy, which should be owned by teachers. The interview result with the respondents showed that the majority of teachers acquire their authority in developing learning in the classroom. It showed that teachers could carry out the innovation and creativity in implementing their learning duty, by adjusting the learning model developed based on students' condition in order to be able to accept the lesson in accordance with the planning.

Teachers' response towards the implementation of autonomy in learning activity can be seen in the [Table 5](#).

3.6. Teachers' Influence in Creating a Conducive Learning Environment

A conducive school environment to learn is the first and the main requirement in order to students can implement learning which can develop knowledge owned by students. A conducive learning environment to study, one of which is determined by teacher role in managing the class as well as handling the learning implementation.

Table 6. Teachers' Response towards the Dimension of Influence

Items	Score				Mean
	1	2	3	4	
Teacher empowerment policy enacted by regional government is welcomed in my region	0 0.0%	7 18.4%	22 57.9%	9 23.7%	3.05
I have an ability to accomplish work matters as teacher at school	0 0.0%	1 2.6%	30 78.9%	7 18.4%	3.16
I have an ability to foster the staff	2 5.3%	13 34.2%	22 57.9%	1 2.6%	2.58
I have an influence to enhance learning quality	0 0.0%	3 7.9%	27 71.1%	8 21.1%	3.13
I am frequently involved in the development of the enhancement program of education quality at school	0 0.0%	5 15.2%	24 63.2%	9 23.7%	3.09
I feel having an ability to influence other people in the development of learning materials	1 2.6%	8 21.1%	27 71.1%	2 5.3%	2.79
I can make an innovation in learning to improve student achievement	0 0.0%	1 2.6%	20 52.6%	17 44.7%	3.42
I have an expertise in my profession as a teacher	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	24 63.2%	14 36.8%	3.37
I can influence colleagues in developing learning process in the classroom	1 2.6%	12 31.6%	22 57.9%	3 7.9%	2.71
My suggestion about learning is necessary by colleagues	1 2.6%	3 7.9%	28 71.8%	6 15.4%	3.00
Mean					3.03

A conducive class to study really depends on students who are inside the classroom, but it also depends on teacher who implements the learning [23], whether the learning condition is enjoyable or oppressive for students. Concerning this condition, teacher is the element and factor, which determines how the class becomes conducive for learning activity.

[Table 6](#) showed that the dimension of teachers' influence to make a conducive class for learning activity had score mean 3.03 and this condition was included in the category of good. The lowest score mean was 2.71 in the item that teacher in implementing activity cannot influence other teachers in implementing learning activity, it means that teacher has an autonomy in implementing learning duty and can give the influence to the class of which becomes his learning duty.

Generally, teachers' response in the implementation of teacher empowerment in Junior High School can be concluded as in the [Table 7](#). The information, which can be revealed that the overall score mean was 3.12 and included as 'good' category.

Based on [Table 7](#), there is a decision that from six dimensions of teacher empowerment, giving authority to teacher to design and implement learning in line with his innovation and creativity ranked in the first place. Then, the effort carried out for professional development ranked in the next position. Meanwhile, teacher confidence

ranked the third position, and the dimension of status ranked at the fourth place. Furthermore, teacher's influence to realize a conducive school environment for learning and teacher's involvement in making decision ranked in the last position. Nevertheless, based on the obtained score mean, all dimensions of teacher empowerment were included in the category of good, except the involvement in decision-making was categorized as satisfactory

Table 7. Teachers' Response towards The Dimensions of Teacher Empowerment

No	Dimensions	Score Mean
1	Making Decision	2.80
2	Professional Development	3.23
3	Status	3.16
4	Confidence	3.29
5	Autonomy	3.36
6	Influence	3.03
	Mean	3.12

For the purpose of development on the discipline, this research contributes in the form of thinking that teacher environment consist of six dimensions namely, teacher's involvement in making decision, professional development, status, confidence, autonomy and teacher's influence to realize a conducive school environment for learning to acquire a good response from teacher. Although those

factors had been studied by previous researcher [22] the research conducted by [22] is different from this research. [22] researched seeking the correlation between teacher's perception and working satisfaction, and the commitment of organization, therefore, the result obtained was the correlation between variables, while this research observed the implementation of teacher empowerment policy by revealing teachers' response towards the implementation of empowerment.

The research about empowerment also has been conducted by [24] Ronit conducted a research about the influence of teacher empowerment towards the commitment of organization, the commitment of professional and the behavior of organization at school. However, this research elaborated about teachers' response towards the implementation of the empowerment conducted through the closed and opened instruments completed through interview

4. Conclusion

The research result showed that teachers' perception towards teacher empowerment has a good response, except teacher's involvement in making decision. Besides, it showed that psychologically, the implementation of teacher empowerment could cause teacher feel satisfied in implementing his job, because they have a high commitment to keep serving and implementing their duty in learning activity. A teacher who feels satisfied in implementing his obligation, will show his seriousness in implementing his duty, the implication is student achievement is increased. The increasing student achievement followed by the increasing school achievement as well as further the better education quality is. It shows that by the existence of teacher empowerment, teacher quality is increased and the implication is education quality is getting better, because a teacher is the main factor in the improvement of school quality.

Viewed from political aspect and the constitution, central government has given a strong basis to improve education quality, namely in the constitution No. 20 of 2003 about national education system and also the effort to improve teacher quality based on the constitution No. 14 of 2005 about teacher and lecturer.

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